

*External Affairs*

The Canadian government, as I indicated in my last statement, has welcomed indications that our friends in Europe intend to unite their forces in the interests of continental defence and continental co-operation. We have not taken the position that EDC was the only means to this end, but we have stated our support for EDC as a satisfactory arrangement and indeed as the only one which has been put forward officially. Furthermore, as a member of NATO with which EDC if it comes into existence will be associated, we have expressed our satisfaction that the creation of the European defence community will strengthen the North Atlantic community and integrate the defences of the whole North Atlantic area.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are no mean objectives and perhaps it was unrealistic to expect their rapid realization. But surely we across the Atlantic have some right to expect that if the pace has been slow, it should be steady. Certainly, if there were any lingering doubts that we were on the right path those were dispelled by the example of soviet policy at Berlin. We in Canada have, I think, felt and demonstrated sympathy and understanding for those in Europe who have demanded full time for consideration of EDC. In view of their history we have understood their hesitation. But while recognizing the necessity, the very real necessity, for caution and prudence, we may feel also over here that there comes a time when in certain situations failure to act may in the long run prove to have been the most dangerous of all possible courses, and that the greatest probability of safety may lie in decisive acts of faith.

At the Berlin conference the U.S.S.R. has made it very clear that they oppose EDC because they see in it a strong obstacle to their own policy. Their opposition is, perhaps, understandable, though it is based I think on false fears and false assumptions. The European defence community has been devised from the beginning to contribute to the defensive collective strength of western Europe, with which will be associated the United States and Canada. The men in the Kremlin apparently feel that continued failure to ratify the EDC project would tend to serve their purposes of keeping free Europe weak and divided. I agree with them, and that is one reason why we must hope that EDC or something like it will soon come into existence.

The other item on the Berlin agenda which was dealt with has resulted, as the house

[Mr. Pearson.]

knows, in the calling of the Geneva conference. I believe this conference can be welcomed. But again, we should have no exaggerated hopes of success. We must, of course, do our best to bring about that success. We must refuse to give up the struggle if we seem to be having difficulty in the first week or two. But it is not going to be an easy conference, and indeed it is not going to be a conference from which we can be sure of constructive results. For one thing, we shall have new membership at that conference in the personnel of the delegation from communist China.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, whom we were happy to welcome in Ottawa only a few weeks ago, had this to say in London at a dinner on March 18:

Now, we are facing a new chapter in the Korean story. Next month in Geneva the nations who fought under the United Nations flag in Korea return to the conference table to seek peace. At this table the communist countries will be fully represented for the first time. The negotiations that will be undertaken in Geneva will be of extreme difficulty, yet it would be a serious mistake to allow them to lapse again should it prove impossible quickly to conclude that peace treaty.

He concluded this part of his remarks in these words:

It is inherent in the United Nations' approach that the western world and the communist world meet regularly around the conference table.

I was asked on Tuesday by the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) what would be our instructions as a Canadian delegation at this conference. Mr. Speaker, that can be stated in very general terms. We shall do our best to assist in the process of converting the Korean armistice, a somewhat uneasy Korean armistice, into a durable and satisfactory peace within the United Nations frame of reference which has been set down for this conference, and by which we as a government, indeed as a parliament, are bound.

The United Nations' resolution on this subject reads—at least the important sentence of it—that the objectives we are to seek are:

Achievement by peaceful means of a unified, independent and democratic Korea under a representative form of government and the full restoration of international peace and security in the area.

These are the goals of the Canadian delegation to the conference, and indeed they should be the goals of each delegation whose right to participate at the conference stems from its military contribution to the United Nations' cause in Korea. I can see no obstacle that could not be overcome in the way of the realization of that resolution if there is good faith and good will on both sides; but that "if", Mr. Speaker, as we know from unhappy experience, is big enough to restrain undue